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MMS Recognizes Safety Record On Offshore Platform Heritage

The Interior Department's Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced today that ExxonMobil Production Company received the MMS District Safety Award for Excellence (SAFE) in recognition of the manner in which it conducted oil and gas drilling and production activities on its Platform Heritage throughout the past year. During the 2002 rating period, MMS inspections found no violations of federal operating regulations on the company's offshore oil and gas facility, which is located offshore Santa Barbara County, California.

"The Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the Minerals Management Service join me in commending ExxonMobil Production Company for its part in developing natural gas and oil resources offshore California while maintaining a constant awareness for the safety of personnel, protection of the environment, and adherence to federal regulations," said Peter L. Tweedt, MMS Pacific Regional Manager.

The MMS recognized ExxonMobil Production Company for its demonstrated safety record in conducting simultaneous drilling and production operations on Platform Heritage. Results from over 20 MMS inspections found the operator maintained a high level of preventive maintenance, safety and environmental protection awareness, and excellent housekeeping practices on the facility throughout the 2002 calendar year.

MMS established the SAFE Program in 1983 to recognize companies that expend extra effort in conducting operations to enhance offshore operational safety and environmental protection for the nation's outer continental shelf. In addition to federal regulatory compliance, criteria for nominees include accuracy of recordkeeping, training of personnel, equipment maintenance, and utilization of new technology. Additional information on the MMS SAFE award can be found on the MMS website at <http://www.mms.gov/omm/pacific/offshore/safety/safetyawardlist.htm>

MMS is the federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf in federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from federal and American Indian leases. These revenues totaled over \$6 billion in 2002 and nearly \$127 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Annually, nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition and development of state and federal park and recreation lands.

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